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State of Missouri
DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS
Ad Excelleum Conamur - "We Strive Towards Excellence"

DATE: December 29, 2006

TO: All Superintendents
All District Administrators

FROM:  Larry Crawford, Director

SUBJECT: **Missouri Reentry Process (MRP) Progress Report**

This past October the Department's Research Unit conducted an initial study of the impact that the MRP changes are having. The early results were very encouraging. I provided a copy of the Progress Report on MRP to you. The initial study, dated October 23, 2006, included a comparison of recidivism rates for three groups of offender releases. The Research Unit recently provided an updated report (December 20, 2006) with expanded data related to recidivism.

The updated report provides the six (6) and twelve (12) month recidivism rate for six groups of offender releases. Offenders released after a THU assignment of five months or longer had a recidivism rate that was 6.8% lower after six (6) months and 4.1% lower after twelve (12) months when compared to all offenders released from all institutions. The updated report additionally reflects that offenders released after a THU assignment of five months or longer had a recidivism rate that was 8.7% lower after six (6) months and 4.7% lower after twelve (12) months when compared to releases from Institutions without a THU. The updated report also reflects that offenders released after five months of THU assignment had a lower recidivism rate than offenders that were assigned to a THU for less than five months. The additional recidivism data provided in the December 20th report reflects improved outcomes for offenders that receive full (5 months or longer) THU services when compared to all other groups of released offenders in the study.

A copy of the updated MRP Progress Report is attached for your review. Again, I encourage you to share this report with your staff and express my appreciation for everyone's continued efforts to improve community safety for the citizens of the State of Missouri.

LC/sr

c: DOC Executive Staff
MRP Steering Team
DOC Assistant Division Directors
File

MISSOURI DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS

Progress Report on the Missouri Re-Entry Process (MRP)

December 20, 2006

An outcome study has been completed by the Department's Research Unit of offenders released through the Missouri re-entry process. The initial results are encouraging. The study found that offenders released from a Transitional Housing Unit (THU) had a recidivism rate after six months that was 6.8% lower than for all offenders who had been released from all institutions in the study period. For offenders who had been released from a THU for at least 12 months the reduction in recidivism was 4.1%. If the reduction in recidivism is maintained as both the number of offenders who go through the re-entry process increases and as the time from release increases then the re-entry process will significantly reduce the number of offenders being returned to prison. The Department and the MRP Steering Committee plan that the collaborative re-entry process will be provided to all released offenders.

The Study

The research was based upon information extracted from the Department's offender management database (OPII) and the study comprised the following four steps:

- Identify the re-entry population.
- Quantify the services provided to the re-entry population
- Identify the comparison group
- Measure the outcomes of the re-entry group and the comparison group

Identify the Re-Entry Population

To ensure that the offenders who had been released from the THUs had been through the re-entry process the study included offenders who had been released from July 1, 2005 to July 31, 2006 and who had stayed in a THU at least five months. The planned stay in a THU is 180 days but for offenders with short sentences or for parolee returns with technical violations the time from the setting of the presumptive release date to actual release may be less than 180 days. If offenders do not have adequate time in the THU then there may not be sufficient time for the offenders to complete the stipulated programs prior to release. The study found that:

- There were 3,741 offenders released from a THU in the study period (17% of all releases)
- The average stay in the THU was 4.8 months
- 64% of offenders had stayed five months or longer in the THU before release (2,395)

The five THUs in the study were located in the Correctional Centers of Algoa, Booneville, Missouri Eastern, Women's Eastern Reception and Diagnostic and the Western Reception and Diagnostic. In June 2006 a further six THUs were opened at Chillicothe, Farmington, Moberly, Tipton and Western Correctional Centers and at Maryville Treatment Center.

Quantify the Services Provided to the Re-Entry Population

While in the transitional housing unit offenders have a core curriculum to complete, that includes Employability and Life Skills (ES/LS), substance abuse education, cognitive programming (Pathways to Change), victim impact and parenting classes, screening and job registration through the Division of Workforce Development and information support provided by the Department of Social Services. These

activities are being recorded in the Transition Accountability Plan (TAP) but the computerization of the process is under development and was not available for the study. As it is important to be able to relate outcomes to measurable inputs in the re-entry process the study used information being entered into program tracking (an OPII module). Not all THU program activity was being entered into program tracking during the study period but the analysis indicated that for the core programs the completion rate was much higher for the offenders who had been in a THU for five months or more than for offenders who had been released from other institutions. For example, the completion rate of ES/LS for females released from a THU was 40% compared to 17% by females released from other institutions. For males, the respective percentages were 30% and 4%.

Identify the Comparison Groups

To be able to measure the gain from the re-entry process the outcomes of the re-entry group have to be matched against the outcomes of a comparison group who did not go through the re-entry process before release. Two comparison measures were developed in the study:

- Baseline measures from the outcomes of offenders released in fiscal year 2005
- Outcomes of offenders who were released in the study period from non-THU institutions

When all offenders go through the re-entry process the FY05 baseline measure will be the only possible comparison measure but in the current study only 17% of releases were released from a THU. A demographic analysis of the THU releases indicated that the THU releases were comparable to other releases for substance abuse, mental health, educational attainment and vocational skills.

Demographics of the THU Releases and the Comparison Groups

	THU Releases	Other Institutional Releases	FY05 Baseline Releases
Percent with Serious Substance Abuse	84%	85%	83%
Percent Mentally Ill	18%	16%	15%
Percent without High School Diploma/GED	43%	39%	39%
Percent Vocationally Unskilled	58%	55%	57%
Percent Female	26%	11%	12%

The over representation of females in the THU release group may result in lower re-entry recidivism rates because female recidivism rates are lower than male rates but, conversely, the over representation may increase the re-entry unemployment rate because females on supervision are more likely to be unemployed than males.

Outcomes of the re-entry group (THU releases) and the comparison groups

Two types of outcome measures were computed. How successful were offenders while on supervision and how many offenders were returned to prison (recidivism). The supervision measures were compiled from the Needs scoring that is part of the regular reporting undertaken by supervising probation and parole officers. The Needs scoring includes employment status, substance abuse activity and violations of the conditions of parole. The long term monitoring of the success of re-entry offenders on supervision will include reviews after 60 days and after 12 months from release. In the first study very few re-entry offenders had been released 12 months with a Needs assessment completed after 12 months. The FY05 Baseline included parolees with a Needs assessment completed after 60 days.

Employment

Employment is a key outcome measure but the initial results indicate that the re-entry group has a slightly lower employment rate (58%) compared to the employment rate of offenders released from other institutions (60%) and to the baseline rate (59%). Achieving employment is a task that takes many

offenders many months to achieve. It should be noted that the baseline employment rate after 12 months on supervision improves to 78%.

Employment Status after 60 days from Release to Supervision

	Releases	Employed FT/PT	Percent Employed
THU 5 mths+	1,204	704	58%
Other Institutions	5,520	3,331	60%
Baseline FY05 releases	14,948	8,866	59%

Substance Abuse

About 85% of re-entry offenders have a substance abuse problem. The Needs substance abuse score indicates that the re-entry population is less likely to be abusing drugs after 60 days than other releases (80%) compared to 77% for other releases and 78% for the baseline releases.

Substance Abuse after 60 days from release to supervision

	Releases	No Active Subs. Abuse	Percent No Subs. Abuse
THU 5 mths+	1,204	959	80%
Other Institutions	5,520	4,246	77%
Baseline FY05 releases	14,948	11,591	78%

Violations of Supervision

Re-entry offenders are more likely to have no technical violations after 60 days than other releases (71%) without technical violations compared to 66% for other releases and 67% for the FY05 baseline releases.

Technical Violations after 60 days from release to supervision

	Releases	No viols. In Last 3 mths	Percent no viols.
THU 5 mths+	1,204	851	71%
Other Institutions	5,520	3,660	66%
Baseline FY05 releases	14,948	10,027	67%

Re-entry offenders are also more likely to have no law violations after 60 days than other releases (90%) compared to 87% for other releases and 88% for the baseline releases.

Law Violations after 60 days from release to supervision

	Releases	No viols. In Last 3 mths	Percent no viols.
THU 5 mths+	1,204	1,087	90%
Other Institutions	5,520	4,791	87%
Baseline FY05 releases	14,948	13,140	88%

Community Intervention Strategies

Community intervention strategies are intended for offenders at risk of failing supervision. The use of supervision strategies for the re-entry group is higher than for other releases (29% compared to 27% for other releases) but is lower than the baseline percentage, 36%. For those offenders who are placed in intensive supervision, the re-entry group has a higher successful completion rate (60% compared to 49% for other offenders and 58% for the baseline releases.

Placed in a Community Intervention Strategy* within 60 days of release

	Releases	Enrolled in Program	Percent Enrolled	Completed Program	Percent Complete
THU 5 mths+	2,395	704	29%	389	60%
Other Institutions	12,124	3,285	27%	1,453	49%
Baseline FY05 releases	20,480	7,296	36%	4,245	58%

Includes Community Release Centers, Community Supervision Centers, Residential Facilities, Electronic Monitoring and Intensive Supervision

Recidivism

The six month recidivism rate for the re-entry group is 14.7% compared to 23.4% for offenders released from other institutions, 21.5% from all institutions and to 23.8% for the baseline rate. The twelve month rate is also significantly lower for the re-entry group (29.5% compared to 34.2% for other releases, 33.6% for all institutions and to 37.3% for the baseline rate). The recidivism rate for law violations is also lower for the offenders who completed 5 months or more in a THU.

The Department normally uses a two year recidivism rate to measure program impact but for the re-entry study only a little over 50% of the re-entry releases have been released 6 months and just over 10% have been released 12 months. The recidivism rates are, therefore, short term and for a limited population. The DOC experience with monitoring recidivism is that short term gains in lower recidivism from institutional programs can be eroded when community support becomes more difficult to provide. Note that the Baseline FY05 figure only includes parole releases and discharges. Probation releases were excluded because the THU re-entry study group included few offenders with court stipulated 120 day sentences.

Average Recidivism Rates after 6 and 12 months

	Releases	Released 6 mths +	Released 12 mths +	First Return		Technical Violations		Law Violations	
				6 mths	12 mths	6 mths	12 mths	6 mths	12 mths
THU 5 mths+	2,347	1,364	268	14.7%	29.5%	12.2%	21.6%	2.6%	7.8%
THU Less 5 mths	1,338	554	-	18.1%	0.0%	15.2%	0.0%	2.9%	0.0%
THU inst. No Rentry	4,421	2,420	331	22.4%	35.7%	18.0%	26.3%	4.4%	9.4%
Other Institutions	9,456	4,840	685	23.4%	34.2%	20.2%	25.7%	3.3%	8.5%
All Institutions	17,562	9,178	1,284	21.5%	33.6%	18.1%	25.0%	3.4%	8.6%
Baseline FY05 Releases	16,236	16,236	16,236	23.8%	37.3%	19.5%	28.4%	4.3%	8.9%